

**THE IMPACT OF MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS ON EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT
IN THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY IN MALAYSIA**

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of Master in Human Resource Management

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DECLARATION

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I hereby declare that this Master's Project is the result of my own work, except for quotations and summaries which have been duly acknowledged.

Signature:

Date: 18th August 2011

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ABSTRACT

This quantitative research aims to examine the impact of recognition, career development, work-life balance and benefits on employee commitment. This includes the objectives as follows: (1) To identify the employee perception with regards to recognition, career development, work-life balance, benefits and employee commitment (2) To examine the relationship between recognition and employee commitment (3) To examine the relationship between career development and employee commitment (4) To examine the relationship between work-life balance and employee commitment and (5) To examine the relationship between benefits and employee commitment. Maslow Theory, Aon Consulting's Performance Pyramid and Vroom's Expectancy Theory as well as past literatures were used to support the research hypotheses. Survey data was collected from 108 employees through convenience sampling of a multi-national oil and gas company. SPSS Version 17 was used to analyze the data. The reliability test was conducted using Cronbach Alpha and data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution and inferential statistics, namely Pearson Correlation, Multiple Regression, ANOVA and Co-efficient. The Pearson Correlation Analysis revealed that: (1) There is a low and significant relationship between recognition and employee commitment ($r=0.259$) (2) There is a low and significant relationship between career development and employee commitment ($r=0.258$) (3) There is a moderate and significant relationship between work-life balance and employee commitment ($r=0.403$) and (4) There is a moderate and significant relationship between benefits and employee commitment ($r=0.571$). The Adjusted R Square of 0.430 from Multiple Regression Analysis shows that 43.0% of employee commitment can be explained by recognition, career development, work-life balance and benefits. The Multiple Regression Analysis also shows that work-life balance and benefits are the strongest predictors of employee commitment with Beta Co-efficient of 0.338 and 0.410 respectively. Limitations, implications and suggestions are also discussed.

Keywords : motivational factors, recognition, career development, work-life balance, benefits, employee commitment

IMPAK FAKTOR MOTIVASI KE ATAS KOMITMEN PEKERJA DALAM INDUSTRI MINYAK DAN GAS DI MALAYSIA

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Ogos 2011

ABSTRAK

Penyelidikan kuantitatif ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji kesan pengiktirafan, pembangunan kerjaya, keseimbangan kerja-kehidupan dan faedah kepada komitmen pekerja. Ini termasuk objektif seperti berikut: (1) Untuk mengenal pasti persepsi pekerja berhubung dengan pengiktirafan, pembangunan kerjaya, keseimbangan kerja-kehidupan, faedah dan komitmen pekerja (2) Untuk mengkaji hubungan antara pengiktirafan dan komitmen pekerja (3) Untuk mengkaji hubungan antara pembangunan kerjaya dan komitmen pekerja (4) Untuk mengkaji hubungan antara keseimbangan kerja-kehidupan dan komitmen pekerja dan (5) Untuk mengkaji hubungan antara faedah dan komitmen pekerja. Teori Hirarki Keperluan Maslow, Piramid Prestasi Aon Consulting dan Teori Jangkaan Vroom serta kesusasteraan yang lalu telah digunakan untuk menyokong hipotesis penyelidikan ini. Data kaji selidik telah dikumpulkan daripada 108 pekerja melalui “convenience sampling” di syarikat multi-nasional minyak dan gas. SPSS Versi 17 telah digunakan untuk menganalisis data. Ujian Reliabiliti telah dijalankan menggunakan Cronbach Alpha dan data di analisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif seperti taburan kekerapan dan statistik inferens, iaitu Pearson Korelasi, Regresi Berbilang, ANOVA dan “Co-efficient”. Analisis Korelasi Pearson menunjukkan bahawa: (1) Terdapat hubungan yang rendah dan signifikan antara pengiktirafan dan komitmen pekerja ($r = 0.259$) (2) Terdapat hubungan yang rendah dan signifikan antara pembangunan kerjaya dan komitmen pekerja ($r = 0.258$) (3) Terdapat hubungan yang sederhana dan signifikan antara keseimbangan kerja-kehidupan dan komitmen pekerja ($r = 0.403$) dan (4) Terdapat hubungan yang sederhana dan signifikan antara faedah dan komitmen pekerja (0.571). “Adjusted R Square” 0.430 daripada Analisis Regresi Berbilang menunjukkan bahawa 43.0% daripada komitmen pekerja dapat dijelaskan oleh pengiktirafan, pembangunan kerjaya, keseimbangan kerja-kehidupan dan faedah. Analisis Regresi Berbilang juga menunjukkan bahawa keseimbangan kerja-kehidupan dan faedah merupakan prediktor utama terhadap komitmen pekerja dengan bacaan “Beta Co-efficient” masing-masing pada 0.338 dan 0.410. Batasan, implikasi serta cadangan turut dibincangkan.

Kata kunci : faktor motivasi, pengiktirafan, pembangunan kerjaya, keseimbangan kerja-kehidupan, faedah , komitmen pekerja

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

B	:	Benefits
CD	:	Career Development
Cert	:	Certificate
Dip	:	Diploma
EC	:	Employee Commitment
Exec	:	Executive
OB	:	Organizational Behavior
Mgr	:	Manager
Non-Exec	:	Non-Executive
R	:	Recognition
Sec	:	Secondary
WCI	:	Work Commitment Index
WLB	:	Work-life Balance

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Human Resource Management has always been linked to human as the most important asset that drives the organization to success or failure (Pierce et. al., 2003; Torrington et. al., 2002). Man is said to be the most complex compared to the other three M, namely money, machine and material. Employees are the only resource that cannot be duplicated (Thomas, 2002). Whilst the other three M's has no feelings, man is ever-changing coupled with its mood swing.

In organization, employers' concern for employee commitment is on the rise due to the high turnover and job-hopping culture which has been a major set-back for organization. In this era of talent-war, employers thrive to compensate with motivational factors to gain competitive advantage in building employee commitment. In returns, employee commitment will have positive impact on job satisfaction as well as productivity and minimize turnover.

As defined by Lincoln and Kalleberg (1990), "when an organization finds a mean to elicit the commitment of its members, it has at its disposal a very powerful mechanism

of control... committed workers are self-directed and motivated actors whose inducement to participation and compliance is their moral bond to the organization..."

Most employers realize that the road to success lies in motivated and commitment workforce who are highly efficient, productive, motivated and dedicated to the organization. Employers' doubting thoughts on employee commitment in terms of loyalty to an organization seems unfair at times. In order to gain employee commitment, employers have to be pro-active in supporting initiatives energizing employees to move towards employee's commitment. Apart from monetary rewards, employers must create a win-win situation via envisage new approaches such as motivational factors to successfully gain employees' commitment.

This research is aimed at studying recognition, career development, work-life balance and benefits as motivational factors which will have an impact on employee commitment. This study has the potential to prove that motivational factors can be as essential as monetary factors in building employee commitment. Employees do face ups and downs in their commitment to their organization. At times, employees do question their loyalty and what factors would actually drive them to be committed to their job and organization. What commitment means to employees? Researcher also strive to prove that money is not the ultimate solution and would like to investigate that money is not the one and only factor that is linked to employee commitment and that motivational factors can play an important role in building employee commitment.

Past research showed that people are motivated by monetary rewards. However, on the contrary, high turnover in the oil and gas industry has reflected low commitment is still a major problem (MEF, Salary Survey for Executives/Non Executives 2010). This commitment issue has led the researcher to study that people may view monetary rewards as not ethical and may revert to motivational factors to make employee stay longer in an organization.

1.2 Problem Statement

In this study, the researcher would like to highlight the issue of commitment amongst employees which has escalated into other human resource issues such as high turnover. In this era of war for talent, organization realized the high costs associated with turnover and the time spent in replacing the resigned staff.

This problem is happening in almost every industry in Malaysia with turnover rate on the rise. Based on the data collected in Hewitt's 2007 Total Compensation Management survey, the average employee turnover rate is 18% (Hewitt, 2008). Another report by Hewitt in The Edge Malaysia in 2009, retaining staff would increasingly prove challenging as the turnover rate in Malaysia increased to 10.1% in 2009 compared to 9.3% in 2008.

As reported by Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) in their recent Salary Survey for Executives/Non Executives 2010:

Average Monthly Turnover Rate (July 2009-June 2010)

	Non-Executive	Executive
Oil & Gas/Petroleum/Chemical Industry	1.56%	0.87%
Overall	1.97%	1.35%

Source : Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF)

The report showed that the turnover rate for non executives is much higher than executives and this is linked to low employee commitment. The employee's desires to hop from one job to another seem to be the trend of today. In three recent surveys conducted in the United States, Canada and Malaysia, it was reported that more than half would abandon their employers if offered comparable jobs elsewhere (McShane, 2009).

Despite monetary rewards, commitment amongst employees is still low. Therefore, the researcher is hoping that this study will be able to provide answers to the following statement:

1. Does recognition increase employee commitment?
2. Does career development increase employee commitment?
3. Does work-life balance increase employee commitment?
4. Do benefits increase employee commitment?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The aim of this research is to examine the impact of motivational factors on employee commitment. Therefore, the objectives of this research work are as follow:

1. To identify the employee perception with regards to recognition, career development, work-life balance, benefits and employee commitment.
2. To examine the relationship between recognition and employee commitment.
3. To examine the relationship between career development and employee commitment.
4. To examine the relationship between work-life balance and employee commitment.
5. To examine the relationship between benefits and employee commitment.
6. To examine the impact of motivational factors on employee commitment.

1.4 Research Questions

The researcher would like to investigate the impact of motivational factors on employee commitment. Therefore, the research questions that will hold relevance to the study are:

1. What is the employee perception with regards to recognition, career development, work-life balance, benefits and employee commitment?
2. Is there a relationship between recognition and employee commitment?
3. Is there a relationship between career development and employee commitment?
4. Is there a relationship between work-life balance and employee commitment?
5. Is there a relationship between benefits and employee commitment?
6. Do motivational factors have an impact on employee commitment?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses for this study are:

- H1: There is a relationship between recognition and employee commitment.
- H2: There is a relationship between career development and employee commitment.
- H3: There is a relationship between work-life balance and employee commitment.
- H4: There is a relationship between benefits and employee commitment.
- H5: Motivational factors do have an impact on employee commitment.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The researcher wishes to establish that there is a relationship between motivational factors, namely recognition, career development, work-life balance and benefits on employee commitment.

The significance of this study will assist organizations in identifying and developing company's policies aimed at increasing employee commitment. To that effect, Human Resource Professionals can devise recognition initiatives, chart career developments plans, promote work-life balance programs and offer attractive benefits in increasing employee commitment.

The management can use the findings from this study to assist them to gain competitive advantage over their competitors in employee commitment from the same industry. This study is also aimed at helping employees to identify the motivational factors that will drive them towards being more committed and loyal to the organization. The employees will feel contented which is the factor that will make them stay longer in the organization. The longer employee stays with an organization, the more valuable they will be in terms of seniority, skill and knowledge.

With this study, the researcher also hopes to add value to body of knowledge to prove that motivational factors play eminent role in increasing employee commitment as

mentioned in Maslow Revisited: Building the employee commitment pyramid (Stum, 2001).

1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of study covers the employees from an oil and gas industry who are based at the headquarters in Kuala Lumpur. For the purpose of this study, the motivational factors only include recognition, career development, work-life balance and benefits.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

1. Time - limited time to collect back the questionnaires as some of the respondents may be working outstation or on a short foreign assignment.
2. Sample - select a sample population that may not reflect the overall population.
3. Respondents – too dependent on the self-reported responses.

These abovementioned factors may affect the accuracy of the data and steps have been undertaken to reduce this problem by assuring the respondents that this study is confidential. Employees can then be rest assured as to provide true and fair opinion as they need not furnish their names in the questionnaire.

1.9 Definitions of Terms

1.9.1 Employee Commitment

In the earlier definition by Mowday, Porter and Steers (1979), employee commitment is based on single attitudinal approach which explains an individual's identification with an organization with a hope to maintain attached to reach its goal without consideration on the motivation theory.

Allen and Meyer (1990) proposed that there are three components of organizational commitment, namely, affective, continuous and normative commitment. Affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. The continuous commitment refers to commitment based on the costs that the employee associates with leaving the organization. The normative commitment refers to the employee's feeling of obligation to remain with the organization.

Gibson et. al. (2009) defined commitment as a sense of identification, loyalty and involvement expressed by an employee towards the organization or unit of organization. Thus, the researcher will be using this on employee commitment as the focus of this study.

1.9.2 Recognition

Yukl (2002) defined recognition as giving praise and showing appreciation to others for excellent performance and significant contributions by an employee to an organization.

For the purpose of this study, the focus will include both informal and formal recognition. Informal recognition can be in the form of simple gestures as a pat on the back to show gratitude, acknowledgement for a job well done and a short note conveying “thank you” meets the basic needs for recognition (Kouzes and Posner, 2003). Formal recognition refers to performance-based awards, new employees’ recognition and etc. (Gostick and Elton, 2005).

1.9.3 Career Development

Lifelong series of activities that contribute to a person’s career exploration, establishment, success and fulfillment (Dessler, 2008).

Noe (2008) defined career development as a process where employees move through a series of career stages with different set of development tasks, activities and relationships.

The researcher will use definition by Dessler (2008) for this study.

1.9.4 Work-life Balance

Milkovich G.T. and Newman J.M. (2008) defined work/life balance as benefits to assist employees in integrating their work and life responsibility. The work-life programs include the following:

- time away from work such as paid vacations.
- attend to personal services for specific needs such as referral for child care or elder care.
- Flexible work arrangement such as flexi-time.

Martocchio (2008) referred paid time-off policies compensate when employees are not performing their primary work duties, providing employees opportunity to integrate work and non-work demands.

The researcher will be using the definition by Milkovich G.T. and Newman J.M. (2008) for this study.

1.9.5 Benefits

Benefits can be defined as indirect financial and non-financial returns for continuous employment with an organization (Dessler, 2008). These benefits are said to influence employees to be more committed to the organization. The employee benefits'

plans can be divided into four categories: supplementary pay benefits, insurance benefits, retirement benefits and employee services benefits. These benefits will ensure that employee stay committed to an organization.

Martocchio (2008) defined employee benefits as compensation other than hourly wage or salary; namely protection, paid time-off, accommodation and enhancement.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher will be using the definition given by Dessler (2008).

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear participant,

I would like to personally thank you for spending time in completing this questionnaire. The data from this survey will be analyzed for the purpose of this research titled **“The impact of motivational factors on employee commitment in the oil and gas industry in Malaysia”**. The information gathered will be treated with care and kept its confidentiality. No individual responses will be revealed.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Best regards,
Yasmin Mohamad Nor

SECTION 1: PERSONAL DATA (Please tick in the appropriate column)

Position Held : Manager ☐ Executive ☐ Non-Executive ☐

Age : 20 and below ☐ 31-40 ☐ 51-60 ☐
 21-30 ☐ 41-50 ☐ >60 ☐

Gender : Male ☐ Female ☐

Marital status : Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorcee ☐

Tenure of service : < 1 year ☐ 2-3 years ☐ 4-5 years ☐
 1-2 years ☐ 3-4 years ☐ >5years ☐

Education : Secondary ☐ Degree ☐ Others ☐
 Certificate ☐ Masters ☐
 Diploma ☐ PhD. ☐

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SECTION 2: RECOGNITION (Please tick in the box below)

(Giving praise and showing appreciation for excellent performance)
1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Somewhat Agree 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Recognition should be given for creative suggestions that improve performance.					
2	Recognition should be given “on the spot” (should not to be delayed).					
3	Informal recognition (eg thank you) is of equal importance as formal recognition.					
4	Formal recognition (eg Best Employee Award) will increase my motivation.					
5	Local recognition events (eg Annual Dinner) are important in a recognition program.					
6	I feel I am valued at work.					
7	When I do a good job, I should receive recognition.					
8	When I do a good job, I have better chance of being promoted.					
9	My company acknowledges my recognition through my performance.					
10	My company recognizes top quality work.					

SECTION 3: CAREER DEVELOPMENT (Please tick in the box below)

(Lifelong series of activities that contribute to a person's career stages)

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Career development benefits my employer.					
2	Career development benefits me.					
3	Career Development will improve my personal growth.					
4	Career development will improve my job performance.					
5	Career development will improve my job.					
6	Career development will further motivate me.					
7	Career development is important because of the beneficial outcomes (eg promotion).					
8	Career development will improve my career prospects.					
9	Career development is important because of the changing nature of my work.					
10	My company rewards me for professional development.					

SECTION 4: WORK-LIFE BALANCE (Please tick in the box below)

(Benefits integrating work and life responsibility)

1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Somewhat Agree 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

		1	2	3	4	5
1	It's difficult for me to fulfill my family responsibilities because of the amount of time I spend on my job.					
2	I arrive at work too tired to function well because of the household work I need to do.					
3	I come home from work too tired to do my household chores.					
4	I can adjust my work schedule if needed.					
5	I still think of my office work when I am home.					
6	My relationship with my family/friends suffer because of my work.					
7	My work affects my enjoyment of my social life.					
8	My work prevents me from being as good a friend/colleague as I would like to be.					
9	My company helps me find an ideal balance between work and life responsibilities.					
10	My company provides a good working environment.					

SECTION 5: BENEFITS (Please tick in the box below)

(Indirect financial and non-financial returns for continuous employment)

		1	2	3	4	5
1	I am satisfied with the number of Annual Leave given by my company.					
2	I am satisfied with the number of Sick Leave given by my company.					
3	I am satisfied with the number of Maternity Leave/Paternity Leave given by my company.					
4	I am satisfied with the Group Personal Accident insurance plan.					
5	I am satisfied with the Hospitalization and Surgical Insurance plan.					
6	I am satisfied that my employer contribute to SOCSO promptly.					
7	I am satisfied that my employer contribute to EPF (more than 12%).					
8	I am satisfied with the educational subsidies given by my company.					
9	I am satisfied with my paid time-off (paid personal leave, eg 1-2 hours).					
10	I am satisfied with the fully subsidized fitness facilities given by my company (eg gym).					

SECTION 6: EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT (Please tick in the box below)

(Sense of identification, loyalty and involvement)
1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Somewhat Agree 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
1 I am glad that I choose this company to work for.					
2 I enjoy working with this company.					
3 I am proud to tell others that I am part of this company.					
4 I work for this company because there are many opportunities for advancement.					
5 I work for this company because I cannot find a better one.					
6 I work for this company because I do not want to lose my benefits (eg retirement benefit).					
7 I cannot quit this job because I have to support my family.					
8 I consider it my commitment to work for the same company until I retire.					
9 I would like lifetime employment with this company.					
10 I would do any job as long as I work here.					

-End of Questionnaire-